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## Theorizing Heritage

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The invitation to deliver the Charles Seeger Lecture came four years ago with a codicil that is both liberating and unnerving.<sup>1</sup> Don't feel you have to talk about music, I was told. *Don't* talk about music. Talk about what you are currently writing. In keeping with this instruction I decided to speak about my attempt to theorize heritage. I concede that the topic of heritage is not immediately apparent from the title of my keynote address, "Actualities, Virtualities, and Other Dilemmas of Display," e-mailed from the deep temperate rainforest of New Zealand, where it made perfect sense. Hopefully, the remarks that follow will make good on that title and on the one I have chosen for the published version of the Seeger lecture. I will draw on insights gleaned during a season on two small islands under Capricorn.

As a folklorist, I was trained to study tradition. In the sixties in the United States, tradition was still a given. It was not yet invented. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger had not yet declared the "invention of tradition" a subject worthy of serious study in its own right (1983). Academic folklorists held their distance from the popularizers, whose worst fault was the liberties they took with tradition and the uses to which they put it: very successful anthologies of folklore, commercial recordings, the folksong revival, folk festivals, careers as performers, and the like. At the time, the divide between academic folklorists and popularizers, as they were disparagingly called, was important to the institutionalization of the discipline in the university. As I have discussed elsewhere, we were all too successful (1988). By the seventies and even more so during the eighties, we had produced more professional folklorists than the academy could absorb. Or, you could say that we failed to expand the discipline within the academy to create a demand for more of our graduates.

Gifted folklorists turned to the public sector, which is now a livelier arena than folklore in the academy, judging by employment opportunities for public folklorists and the prodigious work of high quality they have been producing. One of their most important contributions to the discipline is the

crisis of conscience and consciousness they have precipitated. Their work has forced the discipline to reexamine its very foundations. It has shaken the stability of folklore's disciplinary subject, and it has made the division between academic and public folklore more difficult to sustain.

Of course, it does not help that the very term folklore has acquired negative connotations in both general and academic parlance. Or, maybe the repudiation of the term folklore is good for us because it unsettles the old assurances with which we have worked. The bad rap may prompt us to move in new directions. We used to fight the general perception, codified in the Oxford English Dictionary, that folklore meant misinformation. Or, as Richard M. Dorson characterized the problem, "To the layman, and to the academic man too, folklore suggests falsity, wrongness, fantasy, and distortion. Or, it may conjure up pictures of granny women spinning traditional tales in mountain cabins or gaily costumed peasants performing seasonal dances" (1972:1).

The current president-elect of the American Folklore Society, John Roberts, has objected to the folklorizing of African Americans—to what happens when they are, as he puts it, "folked up" (pers. comm. 1992). Jeff Titon speaks of performers being "folked over" (pers. comm. 1994). Hasidim among whom I have worked look with disdain upon the idea that their Purim plays or music or legends would be studied as folklore. To think of what they do as folklore is to be an unbeliever; by not believing, folklorists devitalize what Hasidim do. A second life as folklore is just not as good, from their perspective, as a first life as faith.

Anthropologist John Comaroff remarked in a speech to University of Chicago alumni several years ago that "folklore, let me tell you, is one of the most dangerous words in the English language" (Gray and Taylor 1992:2). The danger arises because the term often obscures "a highly unreflective populism." Latin American intellectuals object to folklore because they associate it with official heritage as opposed to popular (and resistant) culture (Rowe and Schelling 1991). Franz Fanon conceptualizes folklore as a stage to pass through in the creation of a post-colonial national culture. He delineates this sequence: first, native intellectuals embrace the colonial legacy; then, they valorize native traditions; finally, they reject both in an effort to create a new national culture (1968). Johannes Fabian speaks of folklore as a mode of production (1990:270–75), a formulation that informs my thinking on the subject.

To survive as an academic discipline and without a change of name, folklorists have generally fought the rising tide: we have corrected the "misperceptions" and revised the field in more contemporary and sophisticated terms. I would like to suggest that there is good news in the bad press. Folklore as a discipline will not survive by defending the status quo. It must reimagine itself in a transformed disciplinary and cultural

landscape. If taken seriously, bad press can be catalytic in the discipline's self-assessment. It is in this spirit that I will ask, if folklore is such a bad word, why heritage is such a good one.

I will take my lead from the proposition that folklore is made not found—which does not mean that it is fabricated, though fabrication does of course occur. The ballad forgeries in the eighteenth century are a case in point (Stewart 1991). Folklore's facticity is rather to be found in the ways that particular objects or behaviors come to be identified and understood as folklore (Bausinger 1990). This is the enabling moment for the discipline, for folklorization is something we do in order to create our disciplinary subject, even if those caught in our disciplinary drift net protest. The discipline is deeply implicated in the historical unfolding and political economy of its subject (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1990a).

In my presidential address to the American Folklore Society two years ago, I argued that the discipline was in a state of crisis and explored two of the reasons. The first is topic drift: the term folklore has drifted farther and farther away from what it once signified. Folklorists hold to the term but keep tinkering with the disciplinary subject. The second reason is the discipline's difficulty in constituting a truly contemporary subject. My goal then was to imagine what folklore's contemporary subject might look like. I explored why the field, historically constituted as "the science of tradition," had so much difficulty coming to grips with the contemporary.

My objective here is to return to the problem of tradition—not in defense of folklore's canonical subject, but rather to take the popular "misperceptions" of folklore as indicative of the truths of heritage as they emerge from contemporary practice. Heritage, for the sake of my argument, is the transvaluation of the obsolete, the mistaken, the outmoded, the dead, and the defunct. Heritage is created through a process of exhibition (as knowledge, as performance, as museum display). Exhibition endows heritage thus conceived with a second life.

My argument is built around five propositions: (1) Heritage is a mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past; (2) Heritage is a "value added" industry; (3) Heritage produces the local for export; (4) A hallmark of heritage is the problematic relationship of its objects to its instruments; and (5) A key to heritage is its virtuality, whether in the presence or the absence of actualities.

### **Heritage is a new mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past.**

Heritage is not lost and found, stolen and reclaimed. Despite a discourse of conservation, preservation, restoration, reclamation, recovery, recreation, recuperation, revitalization, and regeneration, heritage

produces something new in the present that has recourse to the past. Such language suggests that heritage is there prior to its identification, evaluation, conservation, and celebration: "Pieces of history are yours to find. . . . The past is waiting for you to explore in The Central West Coast" of the South Island of New Zealand, the flyer beckons. By production, I do not mean that the result is not authentic or that it is invented out of whole cloth. Rather, I wish to underscore that heritage is not lost and found, stolen and reclaimed. It is a mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past.

Heritage not only gives buildings, precincts, and ways of life that are no longer viable for one reason or another a second life as exhibits of themselves; it also produces something new. If a colonial past, a past of missionaries and forced acculturation, threatened to produce "de-culturation," the heritage industry does not so much reverse that process, even though its discourse of reclamation and preservation makes such claims. Rather, the heritage industry is a new mode of cultural production and it produces something new. There is no turning back. If heritage as we know it from the industry were sustainable, it would not require protection. The process of protection, of "adding value," speaks in and to the present, even if it does so in terms of the past.

### **Heritage is a "value added" industry.**

Heritage adds value to existing assets that have either ceased to be viable (subsistence lifestyles, obsolete technologies, abandoned mines, the evidence of past disasters) or that never were economically productive because an area is too hot, too cold, too wet, or too remote. Heritage organizations ensure that places and practices in danger of disappearing because they are no longer occupied or functioning or valued will survive. It does this by adding the value of pastness, exhibition, difference, and where possible indigeneity.

### **The Value of the Past**

Thanks to the heritage industry, "the past is a foreign country" (Hartley 1953). Interfaces like historic villages and re-enactments are time machines, a term coined by H. G. Wells in his 1895 science fiction story, *The Time Machine*. They transport tourists from a now that signifies hereness to a then that signifies thereness. The attribution of pastness creates distance that can be traveled. The notion of time travel is explicit in invitations to "take a trip through history" (Taranaki Heritage Trail) or "walk down memory lane" (Howick Historical Village) in New Zealand. The very term "historic" can be

taken as an indication of obsolescence: no calls can be placed from the "Historic Telephone Box" on the Heritage Trail in Palmerston North. It is enshrined by the City Corporation with the words, "This is a protected building," but its windows now display real estate listings for Harcourts, a business older than the box. Harcourts, which has been operating since 1888, is not on the Heritage Trail.

### **The Value of Exhibition**

Tourism and heritage are collaborative industries, heritage converting locations into destinations and tourism making them economically viable as exhibits of themselves. Locations become museums of themselves within a tourism economy. Once sites, buildings, objects, technologies, or ways of life can no longer sustain themselves as they once did, they "survive"—they are made economically viable—as representations of themselves. They stage their own rebirth as displays of what they once were, sometimes before the body is cold. In East Germany, tourism is stepping in where the heavy industry encouraged by the communist regime is in decline. Thuringa is selling the good old days of Luther and Goethe by featuring its medieval castles, Renaissance town hall, and churches (Kinzer 1993a). Just north of Berlin, on a former army base, "the bad old days" are the subject of a museum and theme park. The museum will present the political and social history of East Germany; the theme park will recreate communist life in East Germany. "Clerks and shopkeepers will be surly and unhelpful. The only products for sale will be those that were available in East Germany" (Kinzer 1993b). Scotland has transformed "an underground bunker, once a nuclear shelter for British Government Ministers," into a "national museum to the Cold War." Golfers putt on the lawn, while 33m beneath them "visitors can explore the nuclear command, computer and communications rooms, dormitories and broadcast studios, all equipped with original artifacts" (Holden 1994). Tourism thrives on such startling juxtapositions, on what might be called the tourist surreal—the foreignness of what is presented to its context of presentation (Clifford 1981:563).

### **The Value of Difference**

It is not in the interest of remote destinations that one arrives in a place indistinguishable from the place one left or from thousands of other destinations competing for market share. "Sameness" is a problem the tourism industry faces, for standardization is part and parcel of economies of scale that high volume tourism requires. Tourists spend much of their time in the grips of the industry, in planes, hotels, buses, and restaurants, in the

infrastructure. Because infrastructure and interface are what add value and generate revenue, there is even greater pressure to elaborate them, even when doing so works counter to the seamless experience of unmediated encounter that tourism promises. The infrastructure becomes the attraction, and hotels become events unto themselves. Gagudju Crocodile Hotel in Kakadu National Park, Northern Australia, is being marketed as "the only crocodile-shaped hotel in the world." And if tourism is too successful, if the town is full or the island overrun, the industry can make an infrastructural intervention. "We couldn't create a new Hawaiian Island, so we built a new kind of Hawaiian resort"—the advertisement in *Conde Nast Traveler* (June 1994) is for Ihilani Resort & Spa, "a twenty-five minute drive from Honolulu International Airport but worlds away." Or it can create a new interface of magical lands, such as Disney's Tomorrowland, Adventureland, and Fantasyland in Anaheim, California.

Hotels, transportation, and restaurants are often similar from place to place. First, vertical integration in the tourism system places much of this infrastructure in the hands of a few national and multinational corporations—the biggest earner is international flights, followed by hotel accommodation. Airlines often own interests in hotels. Second, the industry requires a reliable product that meets universal standards, despite the dispersal of that product across many widely separated locations. Third, sameness can arise from the overzealous dedication of a location to its tourists. Queenstown, the tourist mecca of New Zealand's South Island, is concerned about the proliferation of signage in Japanese. According to Chris Ryan of the New Zealand Tourism Board in an interview on Radio New Zealand (8 September 1994), Japanese tourists who come here for "a distinctly New Zealand experience" may feel like they never left Tokyo. Spending on average \$3148 per person per visit (\$257 a day), these are very desirable tourists. There is also the impracticability of providing signage in all the languages spoken by tourists who do not know English, and local people resent the transformation of the town and the perceived insularity of non-English speaking tour groups. Rapid growth has its down side. Fourth, the very interchangeability of generic products suits the industry, which can quickly shift destinations if one paradise or another is booked solid or hit by a typhoon, political unrest, or currency fluctuations. For this and other reasons, the discourse of tourism marketing is so consistent that only the insertion of place names tells you which getaway or which natural wonder you are being sold. "It took over 5000 years to build the perfect resort." Where? "Israel, on a TWA Getaway vacation" (*New York Times*, 22 November 1987). Or, as Mel Ziegler quipped, "Now that it's easier to go anywhere, it's harder to really get away" (*Banana Republic Catalog #4*, 1987).

### **Heritage produces the local for export.**

The heritage industry "exports" its product through tourism. Tourism is an export industry, one of the world's largest. Unlike other export industries, however, tourism does not export goods for consumption elsewhere. Rather, it imports visitors to consume goods and services locally. To compete for tourists, a location must become a destination, and heritage is one of the ways locations do this. Heritage is a way of producing "hereness." However many tourists arrive in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, or Dunedin, these cities complain that they are only gateways. Tourists pass through them on their way to tourist regions on their outskirts, rather than staying for several days. While a boon to those promoting recreational fishing in Auckland reservoirs, Ben Wilson's dream of "the day when Auckland will have fishing guides based in the city to whisk international travelers straight from their plane or hotel by helicopter to the dams to chase rainbows" is the urban tourism industry's nightmare (South 1994:44). As a 1994 visitor information leaflet tries to persuade the tourist: "Hokitika, 'A Place to Stay for More than a Day.'"

A burgeoning industry in its own right, heritage and its legislative muscle are instruments of planning and urban redevelopment. They work synergistically with tourism. Salem, Massachusetts, has attempted "for almost a decade . . . to augment its declining industrial and regional retail economy with a more vibrant tourism industry," according to the 1 August 1993 real estate section of the *New York Times*. Two hundred million dollars are being infused into this small town of 38,000 to capitalize on its six hundred buildings dating from the 1600s. Kevin J. Foster, chief of the National Maritime Initiative of the Park Service, projects that "Salem—which in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was an important mercantile center—could become an even greater tourist attraction" (Diesenhouse 1993). Similarly, more tourists will pass through Ellis Island Restoration, located on a small island off the tip of Manhattan, than did immigrants through Ellis Island, a processing center in its heyday at the turn of the century (See Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1990b).

### **A hallmark of heritage is the problematic relationship of its objects to its instruments.**

The heritage industry produces something new. Its instruments are a key to this process. Dance teams, heritage performers, craft cooperatives, cultural centers, arts festivals, museums, exhibitions, recordings, archives, indigenous media, and cultural curricula are not only evidence of heritage,



its continuity, and its vitality in the present. They are also instruments for adding value to the cultural forms they perform, teach, exhibit, circulate, and market. Much is made of the traditions themselves, as if the instruments for presenting them were invisible or inconsequential. This point is not missed by those who oppose the placing of Maori weaving on the National Qualifications Framework within the New Zealand educational system, on the grounds that this would "tamper with the traditional methods of transfer of knowledge," with negative effects on community cohesion (Kani 1994).

Heritage productions, like tourism more generally, proclaim the foreignness of objects to their contexts of presentation. This is the appeal of Ihilani Resort & Spa, near the Honolulu airport, which was designed "to create a paradise that offered everything you could want, in a setting where you never thought it could exist" (*Conde Nast Traveler*, June 1994). But heritage productions also tend to conflate their effects (preservation) with the instruments for producing them. A key concept here is the notion of interface and the possibilities interface affords for conveying messages other than those of heritage. Landmarking, historic recreation, cultural conservation, and heritage tourism are not transparent. They are the very instruments for adding value. It is therefore important to examine them and the assumptions guiding them—not only what they produce, but also how. How is value added or lost when *taonga*, Maori treasure, is exhibited in an art gallery or museum of natural history or used on a *marae* (Maori meeting place)? When Maori weaving is taught in school? When Cook Island heritage performances emulate Broadway production values and figure in ceremonies welcoming a head of state to an academic conference? When the Pintubi paint on canvas rather than on their own bodies and circulate their work within an international art market (Myers 1991, 1994)? When a few days become Scottish Week in Wellington or NAIDOC (National Aborigines' and Islanders' Day Observance Committee) Week, to honor Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in Australia? When farmers gather for a World Ploughing Championship in Dunedin? When sheep line up on a stage? When their shearers "demonstrate" their work?

The instruments for adding value—the interface between "traditions" and tourism—connect heritage productions to the present even as they keep alive claims to the past. A hallmark of heritage productions—perhaps their defining feature—is precisely the foreignness of the "tradition" to its context of presentation. This estrangement produces an effect more Brechtian than mimetic and makes the interface a critical site for the production of meanings other than the "heritage" message. Messages of reconciliation, of multiculturalism or biculturalism, or of development are likely to be encoded in the interface. This in part explains why the Uluru cultural center under

construction at Ayers Rock in the Australian desert would make hypervisible the infrastructural management of the site jointly by aborigines and rangers, and why Sir Geoffrey Henry would want to compare the quality of Cook Island performers with the Bolshoi ballet.

The call for “realness” requires that the interface, the means by which the representation is staged, be muted or concealed. Demands for “ethnographic” realism are thus politically fraught. The kind of authenticity that requires the recession of the frame represses what is at stake for those whose heritage is exhibited. The feeling that you are there and nothing is between you and it is like photographs that conceal the camera or photographer that made them. These are illusions with a price. The interface—folk festivals, museum exhibitions, historical villages, concert parties, postcards—are cultural forms in their own right and powerful engines of meaning.

### **A key to heritage productions is their virtuality, whether in the presence or the absence of actualities.**

I am especially interested in rethinking authenticity, invention, and simulation. One way to shift the ground is to anchor the issues in cases where authenticity is irrelevant or where it ceases to explain anything. The atavism of something genuine or real, even if it never materializes, is present in Eric Hobsbawm's notion that organic community and custom are genuine, while Scottish kilts are invented (1983), and in Jean Baudrillard's procession of the simulacrum (1983). I prefer to think in terms of actualities and virtualities, in terms of a collaborative hallucination in an equivocal relationship with actualities.

Consider pilgrimage itineraries. The most ambitious pilgrim can follow a circuit through the entire Indian subcontinent. Alternatively, he can walk the circuit within a region, or within a town, or in a temple, or on a miniature map of India, or even contemplatively in his own mind. One can trace Christ's last steps anywhere, which accounts for the Stations of the Cross processions on Good Friday all over the world. And more to the point, no one asks if the stations are authentic.

### **Actual Destinations, Virtual Places**

The *Automobile Association Book of New Zealand Historical Places* (1984) recognizes the inadequacy of many actual sites to reveal what they are about. “Throughout our history, people have left very different marks on the New Zealand landscape, some faint and some clear. In some cases there is no mark at all, but the place is still historic because we know some important event occurred there” (Wilson 1984:7). This is precisely why both

museums and tourism are largely in the business of virtuality, but claim to be in the business of actualities—of real places, real things, and real experiences. “Hereness,” as the *AA Book of New Zealand Historic Places* understands all too well, is not given but produced.

The production of hereness, in the absence of actualities, depends increasingly on virtualities. The frenzy of memory in downtown Milwaukee requires the instruments of historic walks, plaques, historical societies, museums, tours, and exhibitions because Old Milwaukee is a phantom. It hovers in the spaces cleared by freeways, parking lots, hotels, and convention centres. It does not penetrate the monumental structures that now enclose several city blocks in another Rouse Company mall except as souvenirs and architectural detail. It animates a flourishing heritage industry, thanks to which the phantom is anchored to a patch of sidewalk by means of a plaque that marks where an African American church once stood. Or, it attaches itself to one of the old buildings still standing in a downtown that is otherwise vacated and devitalized, most of its architectural past razed. The very proliferation of “spaces of memory”—what Pierre Nora calls *lieux de mémoire*—in the form of memorials, archives, museums, heritage precincts, and commemorative events are, in his view, an indication of a crisis of memory (1989). Memory requires its prostheses, and never have they been as numerous or as inventive as in our own time.

Those who read American Airline's inflight magazine on the way to Milwaukee learned about the Abbey Church of St. Peter and St. Paul (1088–1804) in Cluny. The size of two football fields, this church outlived its usefulness with the decline of the vast Benedictine monastic order for which it had been the center. Shortly after the French Revolution, the Burgundian village in which it was found allowed the massive church to be dynamited and the stone sold. Not until protective legislation halted the process in the late nineteenth century did the village realize the value of what had been destroyed. As Robb Walsh, a travel writer, reported, “Last year 700,000 tourists came to see Cluny and the church that isn't there.” As he explains, “the only thing larger than the empty space where a church once stood is the legacy of its destruction. . . . Like an amputee who still feels sensations in his phantom limb, the ancient village of Cluny is still haunted by its phantom church.” What do visitors find there? “Towers of the transept, and bases of the interior pillar, the great church's foundations exposed and left vacant.” They also find a virtual church:

A museum dedicated to the church stands a few feet away from the excavation. Inside, I look at an animated, three-dimensional computer re-creation on videotape that shows views of the structure from all angles while a Gregorian chant fills the background. Back outside, I stare again at the void. The computer model is still so fresh in my mind that an image of the enormous edifice seems

to appear before me. I'm not alone in this optical illusion: everyone leaving the museum seems to do the same double take outside. It's as if we're having a mass hallucination of a building that no longer exists. (Walsh 1994:15)

The museum is an integral part of the site. Whether it provides an orientation or interpretive interface for Napier's art deco architectural heritage or for the Waitomo Caves, the museum does for the site what it cannot do for itself. It is not a substitute for the site but an integral part of it, for the interpretive interface shows what cannot otherwise be seen. It offers virtualities in the absence of actualities. It produces hallucinatory effects. On the basis of excavation and historical reconstruction and in collaboration with visitors, the museum openly imagines the site into being—in the very spot where it should be still standing but is no more.

Like museums, tourism is predicated on dislocation: on moving people and, for that matter, sites from one place to another. Take Luxor—Luxor Las Vegas, that is:

Luxor Las Vegas, which opened on October 15, is a 30-story pyramid encased in 11 acres of glass. The hotel's Egyptian theme is reflected in the decor of its 2,526 rooms and 100,000 square foot casino. Guests travel by boat along the River Nile from the registration desk to the elevators, which climb the pyramid at a 39-degree angle. Other features include an obelisk that projects a laser light show in the pyramid's central atrium; seven themed restaurants, and an entertainment complex offering high tech interactive "adventures" into the past, present, and future. Double rooms at the Luxor, 3900 Las Vegas Boulevard South, are \$59 to \$99. (*New York Times*, 7 November 1993, Travel Section)

Is getting to and from the registration desk to the elevators by boat along the River Nile any stranger than squeezing the Temple of Dendur into the Metropolitan Museum of Art? Any stranger than travelling to Luxor, Egypt, itself? Travel Plans International (1988) promises a cruise up "the legendary Nile in a craft that surpasses even Cleopatra's barge of burnished gold. . . . It is a yacht-like 44-passenger vessel carefully chosen for its luxuriously intimate appointments. Each cabin provides panoramic views through picture windows as well as the convenience and comforts of private showers, individual climate control, and television." Several years later, "tourism in Luxor has all but ended because of violence" (Hedges 1993). Islamic militants have been planting bombs in Pharonic monuments, both to drive out tourists and to wipe out traces of idolatry.

Increasingly, we travel to actual destinations to experience virtual places. This is one of several principles that free tourism to invent an infinitude of new products. *The Business of Tourism*, a recent textbook, states that "the beauty of tourism is that the number of products that can be devised to interest the tourist is virtually unlimited" and, I would add, particularly prone to fashion, though some are astonishingly durable (Holloway 1994:147).

In New Zealand, you can “spend the night in jail ‘for a farm stay with a difference,’” at Old Te Whaiti Jail, as it advertises itself. Refashioned as living accommodation, this historic jail wears the irony of its second life as heritage with pride and humor. You can eat in a cowshed. The Cowshed Cafe markets itself as “New Zealand’s only restaurant in a once operating dairy shed (no shit)” (*West of the Alps* 7 [1994]:2). Tourism boosts a declining rural economy by integrating farm life into its network of accommodations and attractions. As *Destination New Zealand: A Growth Strategy for New Zealand Tourism* explains, “while our cultural heritage can be presented as ‘entertainment’ in the hubs, it can be experienced as ‘lifestyle’ in the regions,” particularly when their economic base is in decline and their lifestyle is in jeopardy (1990:23).

Actuality and virtuality are different approaches to the production of realness. Both of them operate in heritage productions, even though those who create them may insist otherwise. Can or should the presentation of heritage aspire to the special effects of Jurassic Park? Spielberg’s film imagines the condition of the ultimate museum, for it goes beyond displaying the remains of a bygone age. It brings the dinosaurs back, not from the dead, but from life—from the archive, the museum, of its genetic material. The problem with the lifelike, however, is its lifelessness. What is this passion for aliveness within the historic village?

To quote Raymond Williams, “a culture can never be reduced to its artifacts while it is being lived” (1960:343). This, however, is what museums have tended to attempt. The issue in this case is not lifelike, the work of the undertaker, but life force, the work of survival. The lifelike is not to be confused with the truly alive. For taonga Maori the issue is not a second life as an exhibit. What is at stake is the restoration of living links to taonga that never died. They were removed from circulation. They were withheld. Some of these objects will forever remain orphans, their provenance unknown, which is a point brought home by the permanent installation of taonga at the Manawatu Museum in Palmerston North. The vibrant relationship of particular objects in the collection to actual people and communities is dramatically displayed in the opening gallery. Nearby, artifacts about which little is known are exhibited separately. Severed links, these isolated objects are a poignant reminder of the circumstances of their acquisition.

The life force of taonga depends not on techniques of animation, but on the living transmission of cultural knowledge and values. What is at stake is not the vividness of a museum experience, but the vitality, the survival, of those for whom these objects are taonga. And that depends on intangible cultural property, which lives in performance. It must be performed to be transmitted; this is the source of its life. This is also the source of its vividness,

for nothing is more multi-sensory than the lifeworld itself, particularly in its most intense, which is to say its most performative modes.

As academics and public folklorists and ethnomusicologists, we are actively "producing" heritage, in the sense argued here. Whereas we have tended to focus on that which counts as heritage, much remains to be done on the instruments for producing heritage. In attending to these issues, we are forced to rethink our disciplinary subjects and practices. Theorizing heritage is a place to start.

## Note

1. This article is a revised version of the Charles Seeger Lecture presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology and the American Folklore Society, Milwaukee, WI, 21 October 1994. It is drawn from an ongoing project, various parts of which have been presented at the Chicago Art Institute, the Sixth National Folklife Conference (Melbourne, Australia), the Museum Directors Federation symposium (Wellington, New Zealand), and the joint conference of the Museums Association of Aotearoa New Zealand Te Rotu Hanga Kaupapa Taonga and Museum Education Association of New Zealand (Palmerston North).

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